



WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

# African American Studies

Department of African American Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

## Program of Study

The department offers a Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies, with three areas of emphasis: (1) humanities, (2) social sciences, and (3) general; an Honors Program; a Minor in AAS; and courses for graduate credit. The department promotes undergraduate and graduate research, actively engages in outreach programs, and offers students needed support and attention to enable them to succeed on our campus.

The African American Studies department is a leader in the training of well-rounded students ready to contribute in shaping our global world. Our department promotes Western's values of "academic excellence, opportunity, social responsibility and personal growth." Created in 1970, the African American Studies department joins similar departments at Harvard, San Francisco State, and a handful of others around the nation, in being among the oldest African American Studies departments in the United States. The department helps students explore the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century through a truly global Africana curriculum, involving strong courses and study abroad, with an esteemed local and international faculty. The department works to shape and achieve Western's mission of recruiting, educating, and graduating a diverse student population who continue the task of strengthening human understanding and achieving personal and community growth. The African American Studies department remains a leader in attracting a diverse pool of excellent students to Western and in producing graduates ready to meet challenges.

Coursework offers outstanding educational opportunities to learn as well as practice various modes of inquiry that will prepare students for graduate studies and/or occupations in various fields, including those requiring disciplined writing and critical analysis. Students are trained to investigate historical, cultural, economic, religious, political, and literary phenomena and are encouraged to formulate new thinking based on thoughtful reflection on personal and community experiences. Students will serve as ambassadors of the department both inside and outside the University.

## Objectives

In pursuance of its missions, the Department of African American Studies strives to . . .

- offer courses that focus on both historical and cultural experiences of Black people in Africa and the Americas.
- collect and disseminate historical and current information that provides an accurate picture of the Black experience as well as aid in the understanding and appreciation of that experience.
- provide a body of knowledge that is an integral part of the general or liberal education of all students.
- supply students with analytical and problem-solving skills that may be useful in dealing with problems confronting Black communities and the United States at large.
- facilitate interaction between faculty and students from different backgrounds and disciplines who share an interest in African American Studies.

HIGHER VALUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Faculty**

African American Studies' strong and multidisciplinary faculty promote excellence through outstanding teaching, research, student mentoring, study abroad, community outreach and public service. They hold doctoral degrees from distinguished universities such as Alberta, Cornell, SUNY-Buffalo, University of Illinois-Chicago, and Wyoming. All are dedicated educators who encourage active student participation.

**Scholarships**

There are many scholarships for which AAS students can apply. Visit the Scholarships web page at [www.wiu.edu/Scholarship](http://www.wiu.edu/Scholarship). For additional opportunities, view our department Resources link at [www.wiu.edu/aas/resources.shtml](http://www.wiu.edu/aas/resources.shtml).

**Honors in African American Studies**

Honors work in African American Studies prepares a student for graduate studies. The student must complete all requirements for a major in African American Studies and must maintain an overall 3.4 GPA. Departmental honors requirements include directed fieldwork and an honors thesis. Detailed information may be obtained by selecting the Requirements link on the Honors website at [www.wiu.edu/Honors](http://www.wiu.edu/Honors).

**African American Studies Club and Organizations**

In addition to the academic advantages, the department supports a vibrant African American Studies Club that builds upon the classroom experience. The University also offers social-cultural organizations for students of African-American heritage. These include the Gwendolyn Brooks Cultural Center, the Black Student Association, the African Student Association, and black fraternities and sororities. Regardless of race or cultural background, all students interested in participating in these social and cultural programs are invited to share in the experience.

**Special Opportunities**

The Department of African American Studies provides students with a comfortable environment in which to seek assistance and to study. AAS strives to provide an academic and social environment that is conducive to the learning process and to the social, intellectual, and emotional development of the diversified student who enrolls in our course offerings.

**After College**

African American Studies provides an excellent preparation for graduate and professional programs, leading to a variety of exciting careers. African American Studies is an interdisciplinary degree relevant to broad areas of human endeavor. It satisfies skills needed in a broad spectrum of professions and scholarly areas, including government, law enforcement, business and international relations, cultural and multicultural affairs, sociology, community health, history, literature, the fine arts, psychology, and more! African American Studies graduates will meet the continuing demands in graduate schools and satisfy the many career area needs for experts on Africa and the African Diaspora, Black neighborhoods, Black history and culture in today's businesses, international relations, and cultural affairs.

**For More Information**

The department welcomes visitors. Call the department chair at 309/298-1181 or e-mail us at [AAS@wiu.edu](mailto:AAS@wiu.edu). You can also learn more about the department and our course offerings by viewing our website: [www.wiu.edu/aas](http://www.wiu.edu/aas).

**Campus Visits**

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, and campus tours are conducted at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM daily. Individual appointments with an admissions counselor, advisors/faculty, or a financial aid advisor may be arranged during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10:00 AM, and a campus tour is conducted at 11:00 AM. An individual appointment with an admissions counselor may be arranged. You may schedule your visit or tour online at [www.admissions.wiu.edu](http://www.admissions.wiu.edu) by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour, or individual appointment by calling toll free 877/PICKWIU (742-5948) or 309/298-3157, or by e-mailing [admissions@wiu.edu](mailto:admissions@wiu.edu).



**[www.wiu.edu/aas](http://www.wiu.edu/aas)**

**Department of African American Studies**

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